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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 TOKYO 000977

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KNNP](#) [OPDC](#) [JA](#)
SUBJECT: COMMUNIST PARTY CHAIR DELIVERS LETTER IN SUPPORT
OF PRESIDENT'S PRAGUE SPEECH

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Classified By: CDA James P. Zumwalt per 1.4 (b/d)

11. (C) Summary: Japanese Communist Party Chairman Kazuo Shii called on the Charge April 28 to deliver a letter to President Obama in which he welcomes the President's April 6 Prague speech, urges the United States to join with other nuclear-weapon states to start negotiations for the elimination of nuclear weapons, and calls on the United States to take concrete steps (such as ratifying the CTBT) within the context of a broader effort to eliminate nuclear weapons. Shii noted that while his party has a number of differences with the United States Government, there are areas of agreement, and his party seeks true friendship with the United States through the creation of a more equal relationship. End Summary.

12. (C) Japanese Communist Party (JCP) Chairman Kazuo Shii called on the Charge April 28 to deliver a letter to President Obama welcoming the President's April 6 speech in Prague (full text of letter in para 6; original pouched to EAP/J). Shii was joined by JCP Diet member Akira Kasai and several members of the party's International Bureau. Noting that the President's speech had so moved him he stayed up until 3:00 a.m. the following morning to write the letter, Shii said it was significant that the United States had for the first time adopted as its national goal the elimination of nuclear weapons and that the President said that the United States had a moral responsibility to act. Although the President said that a nuclear-free world may not be reached in his lifetime, Shii expressed his hope that the world's nuclear-weapon states will for the first time take steps towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

13. (C) The President's call for concrete action by ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and negotiating a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) is also welcome, Shii continued, but these steps should be taken in the context of efforts to completely eliminate nuclear weapons. Shii expressed concern about the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), noting that this "discriminatory treaty" has not succeeded in either compelling nuclear-weapon states to eliminate their weapons or preventing the emergence of new nuclear-weapon states. Acknowledging that the JCP has a number of differences with the United States Government, Shii reiterated that his party welcomes the President's speech and, to achieve "true friendship," seeks a more equal relationship with the United States. "I myself am not anti-American and respect America's great history," Shii added. He said he was a great admirer of Abraham Lincoln.

14. (C) The JCP's stance on the elimination of nuclear weapons reflects views held by many in Japan, the Charge responded. The dangers of Iran and North Korea's nuclear programs show the need for an international response, and this is an area in which the United States and Japan can cooperate, the Charge stressed. Shii said that his party believes that the DPRK should return to the Six Party Talks and that the United States should engage in direct dialogue with the North to encourage this.

15. (C) Shii also said that the JCP planned to publicize its letter of support for President Obama's Prague speech "in a few days after the President has a chance to read the letter." (Note: We will prepare if-asked press guidance confirming the fact of the meeting. End note.)

16. (SBU) Full text of JCP letter to President Obama:

April 28, 2009

The President of the United States of America
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama,

I am writing this letter to you, on behalf of a political party that has worked resolutely for the elimination of nuclear weapons from the face of the earth, hand in hand with the people of Japan, the only A-bombed nation, which suffered untold disasters.

I was deeply impressed to read your speech delivered on April

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5 in Prague in which you said, "I state clearly and with conviction America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons." For the first time, the United States, the biggest nuclear-weapon state in the world, put forward its national goal of "a world without nuclear weapons," namely the elimination of nuclear weapons.

You also said in the speech, "as the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the United States has the moral responsibility to act." You made clear to the world for the first time as U.S. president that the dropping of nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was an event that has a bearing upon human morals and talked about the U.S. having a responsibility to work for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

You added in the speech, "To denounce or shrug off a call for cooperation is an easy but also a cowardly thing to do. That's how wars begin. That's where human progress ends." By so saying, you called on all nations to cooperate for establishing "a world without nuclear weapons," and stressed that "voices for peace and progress must be raised together."

That you made such an official declaration as a U.S. president is of historical significance for both humanity as a whole, and the people of the world's only A-bombed country in particular, which I heartedly welcome.

However, I beg to differ with you when you said in the speech: The goal of a world without nuclear weapons will not be reached, "perhaps in my lifetime." I cannot agree because nuclear-weapon states have never engaged in negotiations for elimination of nuclear weapons as their common goal, and therefore, we cannot set a timeframe in advance for how long it takes, as this is a task no one has ever tackled.

After its establishment, the first United Nations General Assembly resolution adopted on January 24, 1946 decided, in response to the proposal by six countries including yours, and with the support of all member countries, that the United Nations will work for the "elimination of atomic weapons and

of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction." But in the 63 years since then, the nuclear-weapon states have not even called for negotiations for their elimination, not to mention entering into such negotiations.

By demonstrating the initiative for "a world without nuclear weapons," you will open the door to a challenge that no one has ever undertaken. It might take long to proceed from a call for negotiations to their actual opening, and then to reach agreement. This is an historic undertaking that demands "patience and persistence" as stressed in your speech. But it is only by taking the leadership in starting this undertaking that your speech in Prague will exercise its real power to bring about progress and world peace. Consequently, I strongly request that you take the initiative for starting international negotiations for the conclusion of an international treaty for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

In your speech in Prague, you promised to take "concrete steps towards a world without nuclear weapons." These include starting negotiations for a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, pursuing the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and a new treaty that verifiably ends production of fissile materials intended for use in nuclear weapons. I believe that these concrete steps can have a positive and constructive significance when they are tackled together with the goal of elimination of nuclear weapons.

Having seen these kinds of negotiations on partial measures, I am convinced that the whole process has proved that "a world without nuclear weapons" cannot be achieved only through these measures in the absence of the objective of abolishing nuclear arms themselves. Indeed, this is clearly demonstrated by the fact that there are still more than 20,000 nuclear weapons stockpiled all over the world.

As an illustration, we cannot forget that the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space, and Under Water (Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, PTBT) concluded in the 1963, banned nuclear tests in the atmosphere, but that it actually legitimized underground nuclear tests, and, in

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the end, triggered a massive nuclear arms race.

The same holds true for the regime of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This is a discriminatory treaty unprecedented in history because it allows five powers to possess nuclear weapons while imposing on non-nuclear-weapon states an obligation of non-possession. The Japanese Communist Party is of course against an increase in the number of nuclear-weapon states for any reason, but it has at the same time criticized the discriminatory inequality of the treaty.

The international community accepted such inequality only because the nuclear powers pledged that they would make sincere efforts for the elimination of nuclear weapons. Yet the existence of this treaty has not prevented new nuclear-weapon states or those planning to go nuclear from coming into existence. To be candid with you, underlying this is the fact that the nuclear powers have not been true to their pledge in the last 39 years since the NPT entered into force.

Above all, it is regrettable that the previous U.S. government and other countries disaffirmed in the 2005 NPT Review Conference "an unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals" that had been agreed upon in the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Mr. President, you stated in the Prague speech, "(the NPT regime) could reach the point where the center cannot hold." We have to stress that underlying your fear is the fact that the nuclear-weapon states have

maintained the said attitudes for the last 39 years.

The way out of this danger will come when the nuclear-weapon states adopt an attitude of sincerity and responsibility for the elimination of nuclear weapons. We must stress that only when they tackle the task of eliminating nuclear weapons, will they obtain political and moral power to dissuade other countries from pursuing nuclear weapons. I sincerely hope that the nuclear-weapon states confirm the "unequivocal undertaking" towards the elimination of nuclear weapons in the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

As regards the Japan-U.S. relationship, the JCP's basic policy is to turn from the present one of domination-subordination to one of equal footing. Our firm belief is that only under an equal relationship can we develop real friendship between our two peoples. On this mutual relationship, there are many differences of opinion between your government and our party. Nevertheless, I dared to focus, and wanted to convey our opinion, on one point, the task for all humanity, namely the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The only guarantee against nuclear weapons being used is to create "a world without nuclear weapons." You raised this major goal to the world. Let me repeat once again that I welcome your statement, and hope that the spirit of your statement will be given full play in world politics. I would like to conclude my letter with a wish for the friendship between the United States and Japan to develop.

Sincerely yours,
//s//
Kazuo Shii

Chairperson of the Executive Committee
Japanese Communist Party
Member of the House of Representatives, National Diet

End text of letter.
ZUMWALT